

Road to Freedom — One Liberated Apple at a Time. “Feed the People, Eat the Rich!”

By [Colin Todhunter](#)

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A minor but significant spark of direct action occurred in New York on 15 December 2023. A group of people entered a Whole Foods store (owned by Amazon), took groceries without paying and exited wearing Jeff Bezos masks.

Independent reporter Talia Jane posted the following [on Twitter/X](#):

“The action was in protest against corporate wealth alongside increased food insecurity & to call attention to Amazon’s contracts with Israel.”

A “merry band of miscreants” entered a Whole Foods in NYC, lifted a bunch of groceries, & walked out in Jeff Bezos masks.

Per communique, the action was in protest against corporate wealth alongside increased food insecurity & to call attention to Amazon’s contracts with Israel. pic.twitter.com/4TWPoXXIFM

— Talia Jane ♥️👤 (@taliaotg) [December 18, 2023](#)

She also posted a video of the event with people throwing around flyers and shouting, “Feed the people, eat the rich!” Jane stated the food was later redistributed and given to food ‘distros’ and community care spaces feeding migrants and the unhoused.

[It’s Going Down](#) — which describes itself as “a digital community center for anarchist, anti-fascist, autonomous anti-capitalist and anti-colonial movements across so-called North America” — has published on its website the texts of the flyers.

Here is an abridged version of one of the texts:

“We assert that corporations like Amazon and Whole Foods do a tremendous amount of harm: hoarding wealth and resources, stealing labor, and destroying the land we live on. When we purchase food from Whole Foods, only a small fraction of what we spend is going back to those doing the labor to produce the food — the vast majority of it is funneled into Jeff Bezos’s coffers, where it is in turn reinvested in weapon manufacturing, war, and big oil.

“Furthermore, Amazon’s contract for Project Nimbus with the IOF [*Israel Occupation Forces*] means that Bezos profits directly from the ongoing genocide in Palestine. Boycott. Divest. Shoplift. Not another dime for genocide!

“We believe direct action is a vital form of resistance against the capitalist institutions built to crush, starve, and bleed us to death. Solidarity with shoplifters everywhere! We hope you will be inspired to take similar action wherever you are.

“Move like water. Take back what has always been yours. Become ungovernable.”

Some of the unscrupulous practices and the adverse impacts of Bezos and his Amazon corporation are described in the online article [‘Amazon, ‘Economic Terrorism’ and the Destruction of Livelihoods’](#). Indeed, US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in 2019 that Amazon had “destroyed the retail industry across the United States.”

[Project Nimbus](#), referred to in the flyer, is a \$1.2bn contract to provide cloud services for the Israeli military and government and it will allow for further surveillance of and unlawful data collection on Palestinians while facilitating expansion of Israel’s illegal settlements on Palestinian land.

Direct Action

Of course, there will be those who condemn the direct action described above. And they will do so while remaining blissfully unaware of or silent on the direct action of the super-wealthy that has plunged hundreds of millions into hardship and poverty.

The wholly unavoidable conflict in Ukraine (which [profits corporate vultures](#)), [speculative food commodity trading](#), the impact of closing down the global economy via the COVID event and the inflationary impacts of pumping [trillions of dollars into the financial system](#) have driven people into poverty and denied them access to sufficient food.

All such events did not result from an ‘act of God’. They were orchestrated and brought about by deliberate policy decisions. And the effects have been devastating.

In 2022, it was estimated that [a quarter of a billion people across the world would be pushed into absolute poverty](#) in that year alone.

In the UK, [poverty is increasing](#) in two-thirds of communities, food banks are now a necessary part of [life for millions](#) of people and [living standards](#) are plummeting. The poorest families are [enduring a ‘frightening’ collapse in living standards](#), resulting in life-changing and life-limiting poverty. Absolute poverty is set to be at 18.3 per cent by 2023-2024.

In the US, around [30 million](#) low-income people are on the edge of a “hunger cliff” as a portion of their federal food assistance is taken away. In 2021, it was estimated that [one in eight](#) children were going hungry in the US.

[Small businesses are filing for bankruptcy in the US at a record rate](#). Private bankruptcy filings in 2023 have exceeded the highest point recorded during the early stages of COVID by a considerable amount. The four-week moving average for private filings in late February 2023 was 73% higher than in June 2020.

As hundreds of millions suffer, a relative handful of multi-billionaires have gained at their expense.

A [February 2023 report](#) by Greenpeace International showed that 20 food corporations delivered \$53.5 billion to shareholders in the financial years 2020 and 2021. At the same time, the UN estimated that \$51.5 billion would be enough to provide food, shelter and lifesaving support for the world’s 230 million most vulnerable people.

These ‘hunger profiteers’ exploited crises to gain grotesque profits. They plunged millions into hunger while tightening their grip on the global food system.

Meanwhile, [nearly 100 of the biggest US publicly traded companies](#) recorded 2021 profit margins that were at least 50 per cent higher than their 2019 levels.

In a July 2021 report, [Yahoo Finance](#) noted that the richest 0.01% — around 18,000 US families — hold 10% of the country’s wealth today. In 1913, the top 0.01% held 9% of US wealth and just 2% in the late 1970s.

[The wealth of the world’s billionaires](#) increased by \$3.9tn between 18 March and 31 December 2020. Their total wealth then stood at \$11.95tn, a 50% increase in just 9.5 months. Between April and July 2020, during the initial lockdowns, the wealth held by these billionaires grew from \$8 trillion to more than \$10 trillion.

The world’s 10 richest billionaires collectively saw their wealth increase by \$540bn over this period. In September 2020, Jeff Bezos could have paid all 876,000 Amazon employees a \$105,000 bonus and still be as wealthy as he was before COVID.

And do not forget the offshoring of plundered wealth by the super-rich of [\\$50 trillion](#) into hidden accounts.

These are the ‘direct actions’ we should really be concerned about.

A point rammed home via another flyer that was issued during the protest in New York:

“The shelves in this store have been stocked with items that were harvested, prepared, and cooked via a long supply chain of exploitation and extraction from people and land.

“This food was made by the People and it should fill the bellies of the People.

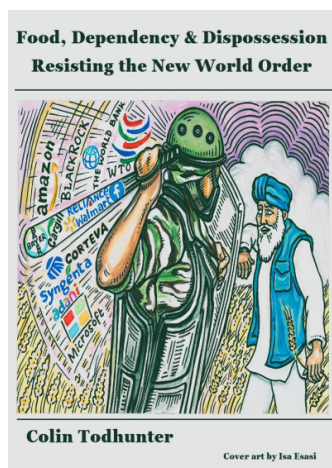
“Don’t fall prey to the myth of scarcity! Look around you: there is enough for all of us. This food is being hoarded, and we are giving it back to our communities. The world belongs to us – everything is already ours.

“We deserve to eat whether we can pay or not. Tear down the system that starves and kills people, one liberated apple at a time!”

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Read Colin Todhunter's e-Book entitled

Food, Dispossession and Dependency. Resisting the New World Order

We are currently seeing an acceleration of the corporate consolidation of the entire global agri-food chain. The high-tech/big data conglomerates, including Amazon, Microsoft, Facebook and Google, [have joined traditional agribusiness giants](#), such as Corteva, Bayer, Cargill and Syngenta, in a quest to impose their model of food and agriculture on the world.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is also involved (documented in '[Gates to a Global Empire](#)' by Navdanya International), whether through [buying up huge tracts of farmland](#), promoting a much-heralded ([but failed](#)) '[green revolution](#)' for Africa, pushing [biosynthetic food](#) and [genetic engineering technologies](#) or more generally [facilitating the aims of the mega agri-food corporations](#).

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